

Emergency Response News



June 2003

IDEM reacts to runoff of hog manure from a farm into a ditch at Grabill, Allen County

The Indiana Department of Environmental Management (IDEM) responded to an over application of hog manure at a farm that contaminated a State waterway in Grabill, Allen County.

On June 11, an IDEM On Scene Coordinator received a call from an Indiana Department of Natural Resources Conservation Officer concerning a citizen's complaint about runoff from land application of manure at a hog farm into Wertz Ditch, a tributary of Black Creek. The On Scene Coordinator notified the Allen County Emergency Management Agency, whose staff joined a Conservation Officer to investigate and confirm manure contamination in the ditch.



The On Scene Coordinator inspected the farm and found puddles of manure in a saturated field, which indicated a land application overrun. The farmer had tried unsuccessfully to plug a damaged tile to prevent further contamination to Wertz Ditch. Runoff of manure had flowed into an underground section of the ditch and reappeared downstream. IDEM staff sampled the water in the ditch and detected elevated levels of ammonia nitrogen.

The On Scene Coordinator oversaw the cleanup and preventive measures undertaken by the farmer. Cleanup actions included improving the plug in the drain tile, digging up the tile near the road and removing manure from the ditch by pumping it into a tanker. The wastewater was taken to the farmer's confined feeding lagoon for disposal.

IDEM staff oversaw the cleanup and continued to test water in the ditch for ammonia nitrogen during the cleanup.

Staff has referred the site to the agency's Agriculture and Solid Waste Compliance Section for follow up inspections.

Site Snapshot

IDEM actions:

Investigated and oversaw cleanup of manure runoff from a farm field to a ditch

Locations:

Farm and Wertz Ditch in Grabill, Allen County

Primary substance of concern:

Ammonia nitrogen found in manure

Environmental threat:

Impact to waters of the State

For further information about IDEM's emergency response actions at this site, contact staff at the following phone numbers or at IDEM's toll-free phone number, (800) 451-6027:

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